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DATE: **February 10, 2009**
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HARFORD COUNTY LAUNCHES NEW EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

(Bel Air, MD- February 10, 2009) - - Harford County has announced today that it has implemented a new mass notification service in order to best communicate with residents regarding time-sensitive incidents involving public safety matters.

The Connect-CTY service allows county officials to record, send and track personalized voice messages to county residents, businesses, and local agencies in mere minutes, all via a single telephone call. The county will also be able to send text messages to cell phones, PDAs, e-mail accounts, and TTY/TDD receiving devices for the hearing impaired.

"We are constantly striving to provide the utmost in public safety to our citizens, and this improved communications system will play a vital element," said Harford County Executive David R. Craig. "The Connect-CTY service will enable us to quickly and accurately send information to residents countywide should the situation arise."

County administrators can target messages to an unlimited number of groups- everything from mobilizing emergency response teams to coordinating efforts with necessary agencies or volunteers. Authorized users also can use a map on the Connect-CTY system to contact specific geographical locations, sending messages only to the residents within select neighborhoods when needed.

"With the Connect-CTY service, we will be able to reach out to citizens directly regarding

any time-sensitive issue, such as severe weather, missing persons or road closures," said Rick Ayers, Emergency Management Director. "I strongly urge residents to register their contact information into the secure Connect-CTY service database to make sure they are ready to receive important information at any given time."

Publicly available primary residential and business phones in

Harford County will automatically be included in the system. However, residents can opt-in to provide their complete information (up to three phone numbers and two e-mail addresses) and indicate if they have a TTY/TDD device by visiting the Harford County Division of Emergency Operations website at www.harfordpublicsafety.org and clicking on the link that says **"One Step Notification- Sign Up Now"** to enter their information into the secure database. Those without Internet access can have their information added into the system by calling (410) 638-4900.Residents with call blocking services can make sure to receive the county's time-sensitive calls by adding (410) 838-5800 to their approved number list. All information added into the database will remain secure and confidential, and will *not* be used for any purpose other than the notification system.

Public safety officials will be conducting a county-wide automated telephone calllater this month in order to test the system. All citizens and businesses with a published telephone number, as well as those who have registered additional contact information, should expect to receive this prerecorded test message. No further action will be required from residents who receive this phone call.

"Preserving Harford's past; promoting Harford's future"